IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 3, 10, and 17, and amend claims 1, 2, 4, 6, 8, 9, 12, 13, 15, 16, 19, and 20 without prejudice or disclaimer, and add new claim 22, resulting in the following set of claims:

1. (currently amended)   A method of processing manufacturer-funded discounts specific to a retailer for a system including a first retailer, a second retailer, and a plurality of manufacturers each associated with a respective product, the plurality of manufacturers including a first manufacturer having a first computer system, the method comprising:

enabling a price adjustment for a first purchase with the first retailer, by storing a first monetary amount in the first computer system, the first monetary amount corresponding to a budget for discounts occurring only in the first retailer;

enabling a price adjustment for a second purchase with the second retailer, by storing a second monetary amount in the first computer system, the second monetary amount corresponding to a budget for discounts occurring only in the second retailer;

subsequently, effecting the first purchase with the first retailer;

generating a first signal storing the transaction amount of corresponding to the first purchase and sending the first signal on a first signal path;

generating a second signal corresponding to the first purchase and sending the second signal on a second signal path;

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receiving the first signal from the first signal path, and the second signal from the

second signal path; ~~and~~

subsequently, processing the <u>second signal and the transaction amount stored</u>

<u>in the first signal</u> ~~first and second signals~~ received in the previous step, to generate a

third signal corresponding to an offset of funds between a selected manufacturer and

the <u>first</u> retailer, wherein the manufacturer is selected depending on a product

subjected to the first purchase;

<u>effecting the second purchase with the second retailer;</u>

<u>generating a fourth signal storing the transaction amount of the second</u>

<u>purchase;</u>

<u>generating a fifth signal corresponding to the second purchase;</u>

<u>processing the fifth signal and the transaction amount stored in the fourth signal,</u>

<u>to generate a signal corresponding to an offset of funds between the selected</u>

<u>manufacturer and the second retailer.</u>

2. (currently amended)   The method of claim 1 wherein the <u>first retailer</u> ~~system~~

includes a store having shelves, products on the shelves, and a display supported by

one of the shelves, the display displaying a discount level for a product, and the <u>step of</u>

<u>effecting the first purchase</u> ~~method~~ further includes effecting the first purchase in

accordance with the display.

Claim 3 (cancelled).

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4. (original)   The method of claim 3 wherein the second retailer is in competition with the first retailer.

5. (currently amended)   The method of claim 1 wherein the <u>first computer system stores a third</u> ~~plurality of manufacturers include a first manufacturer having a computer system storing a first monetary amount, corresponding to the price adjustment, and a second~~ monetary amount corresponding to a <u>discount occurring in any retailer</u> ~~different system of discounts~~ for the product.

6. (currently amended)   The method of claim 1 wherein the <u>first</u> retailer includes a plurality of stores each located in a respective building, and receiving the first signal includes

receiving a plurality of first signals from the plurality of stores.

7. (original)   The method of claim 1 wherein the system further includes a checkout station, the

first signal path begins at the checkout station and the second signal path begins at the checkout station.

8. (currently amended)   In a first system including a <u>first</u> retailer<u>, a second</u>

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retailer, and a plurality of manufacturers each associated with a respective product, the plurality of manufacturers including a first manufacturer having a first computer system, a processing system comprising:

a first monetary amount stored in the first computer system, the first monetary amount corresponding to a budget for discounts occurring only in the first retailer;

a second monetary amount stored in the first computer system, the second monetary amount corresponding to a budget for discounts occurring only in the second retailer;

a generator, in the first retailer, that generates a first signal corresponding to a price-adjusted first purchase with the first a retailer and sends sending the first signal on a first signal path, after the first monetary amount is stored in the first computer system;

a generator, in the first retailer, that generates a second signal corresponding to the price-adjusted first purchase and sends sending the second signal on a second signal path; and

a processor that receives the first and second signals, to generate a signal corresponding to an offset of funds between a selected manufacturer and the first retailer, wherein the manufacturer is selected depending on a product subjected to the first purchase ;

a generator, in the second retailer, that generates a fourth signal corresponding to a price-adjusted second purchase with the second retailer and sends the first signal on a first signal path; and

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a generator, in the second retailer, that generates a fifth signal corresponding to a price-adjusted second purchase and sends the second signal on a second signal path,

wherein the processor receives the fourth and fifth signals, to generate a signal corresponding to an offset of funds between the selected manufacturer and the second retailer.

9. (currently amended) The processing system of claim 8 wherein the first retailer ~~system~~ includes a store having shelves, products on the shelves, and a display supported by one of the shelves, the display displaying a discount level for a product, and the system effects the price-adjusted ~~method further includes effecting the~~ first purchase in accordance with the display.

Claim 10 (cancelled).

11. (original) The processing system of claim 10 wherein the second retailer is in competition with the first retailer.

12. (currently amended) The processing system of claim 8 wherein the first computer system stores a third ~~selected manufacturer includes a computer system storing a first monetary amount, corresponding to the price-adjustment, and a second~~ monetary amount corresponding to a discount occurring in any retailer ~~different system~~

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~~of discounts~~ for the product.

13. (currently amended)   The processing system of claim 8 wherein the <u>first</u>

retailer includes a plurality of stores each located in a respective building, and the

processor acts to receive a plurality of first signals from the plurality of stores.

14. (original)   The processing system of claim 8 wherein the first system further

includes a checkout station, the first signal path begins at the checkout station and the

second signal path begins at the checkout station.

15. (currently amended)   In a first system including a <u>first</u> retailer<u>, a second</u>

<u>retailer</u>, and a plurality of manufacturers each associated with a respective product<u>, the</u>

<u>plurality of manufacturers including a first manufacturer having a first computer system</u>,

a processing system comprising:

means for enabling a price adjustment for a first purchase with the <u>first</u> retailer<u>,</u>

<u>by storing a first monetary amount in the first computer system, the first monetary</u>

<u>amount corresponding to a budget for discounts occurring only in the first retailer;</u>

<u>means for enabling a price adjustment for a second purchase with the second</u>

<u>retailer, by storing a second monetary amount in the first computer system, the second</u>

<u>monetary amount corresponding to a budget for discounts occurring only in the second</u>

<u>retailer;</u>

means for <u>subsequently</u> effecting the first purchase with the <u>first</u> retailer;

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means for generating a first signal corresponding to the first purchase and sending the first signal on a first signal path;

means for generating a second signal corresponding to the first purchase and sending the second signal on a second signal path;

means for receiving the first signal from the first signal path, and the second signal from the second signal path; ~~and~~

means for processing the first and second signals received in the previous step, to generate a signal corresponding to an offset of funds between a selected manufacturer and the <u>first</u> retailer, wherein the manufacturer is selected depending on a product subjected to the first purchase <u>:</u>

<u>means for effecting the second purchase with the second retailer;</u>

<u>means for generating a fourth signal corresponding to the second purchase; and</u>

<u>means for generating a fifth signal corresponding to the second purchase, wherein the means for processing receives the fourth and fifth signals, to generate a signal corresponding to an offset of funds between the selected manufacturer and the second retailer.</u>

16. (currently amended)   The processing system of claim 15 wherein the first <u>retailer</u> ~~system~~ includes a store having shelves, products on the shelves, and a display supported by one of the shelves, the display displaying a discount level for a product, and the <u>means for</u> ~~method further includes~~ effecting the first purchase <u>effects the first purchase</u> in accordance with the display.

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Claim 17 (cancelled).

18. (original)   The processing system of claim 17 wherein the second retailer is in competition with the first retailer.

19. (currently amended) The processing system of claim 17 wherein the <u>first computer system stores a third</u> selected manufacturer includes a computer system storing a first monetary amount, corresponding to the price adjustment, and a second monetary amount corresponding to a <u>discount occurring in any retailer</u> different system of discounts for the product.

20. (currently amended)   The processing system of claim 17 wherein the <u>first</u> retailer includes a plurality of stores each located in a respective building, and means for receiving the first signal acts to receive a plurality of first signals from the plurality of stores.

21. (original)   The processing system of claim 17 wherein the first system further includes a checkout station, the first signal path begins at the checkout station and the second signal path begins at the checkout station.

Please add the following claims:

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22. (new) The method of claim 5 wherein the discount occurring in any retailer is effected with a coupon.

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